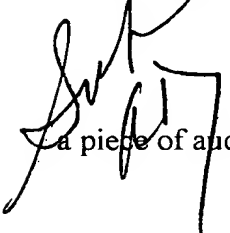
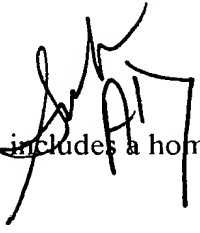


IT IS CLAIMED:

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1. A method of controlling sound emitted by a device other than a piece of audio-video equipment, comprising:
operating a sound mute function key of a remote control to cause the remote control to emit a signal to which a particular piece of audio-video equipment
5 is adapted to respond by muting its sound output, and
causing the device to receive the mute signal from the remote control and responsively mute its emission of sound.
 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said particular piece of audio-video equipment is also caused to receive the mute signal from the remote control to mute its sound simultaneously with the device sound being muted.
 3. The method of claim 1, additionally comprises operating function keys of said remote control to cause the remote control to emit signals to which the particular piece of audio-video equipment is adapted to respond by increasing or decreasing a level of its sound output, and causing the device to receive
5 the sound increase or sound decrease signals from the remote control to respectively increase or decrease the level of the device sound output in response.
 4. The method of claim 3, wherein said particular piece of audio-video equipment is also caused to receive the sound increasing or sound decreasing signal from the remote control to respectively increase or decrease the level of its sound simultaneously with the level of the device sound output being increased or
5 decreased.
 5. The method of any one of claims 1-4, wherein the device includes a toy.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the toy is either a stuffed animal or a doll.

 7. The method of any one of claims 1-4, wherein the device includes a home appliance.

8. A device other than audio-video equipment, comprising:
a receiver of wireless control signals of the type emitted by a plurality of remote controls that individually emit their control signals with a different one of a plurality of distinct signal protocols to specify individual functions to be performed
5 by different types of audio-video equipment that individually respond to one of the plurality of protocols,

a decoder connected to the receiver to identify one of the plurality of signal protocols for a received control signal from a specific remote control and decode therefrom the function represented thereby, and
10 performing the decoded function within the device.

9. The device of claim 8, additionally comprising a sound generator within the device, and wherein the function decoded by the decoder includes a sound control function that is performed with the sound generator.

10. The device of claim 9, wherein the decoded sound control function includes muting the sound generator.

11. The device of claim 9, wherein the decoded sound control function includes adjusting a volume of sound emitted by the sound generator.

12. The device of any one of claims 8-11, wherein said device includes a toy.

13. The device of claim 12, wherein the toy is either a stuffed animal or a doll.

14. The device of any one of claims 8-11, wherein said device includes a home appliance.

15. The device of claim 8, wherein the wireless control signals include infra-red radiation pulses.

16. A toy, comprising:
 a sound generator,
 a receiver of wireless control signals of the type emitted by a plurality
 of remote controls that individually emit their control signals with a different one of
 5 a plurality of distinct protocols to specify individual functions to be performed by
 different types of audio-video equipment that individually respond to one of the
 plurality of protocols, wherein the individual functions includes a function of muting
 a sound output of the corresponding piece of audio-video equipment, and
 a decoder connected to the receiver to identify one of the plurality of
 10 signal protocols of a received control signal from a specific remote control, to
 decode therefrom the muting function represented thereby and to mute the toy sound
 generator in response.

17. The toy of claim 16, wherein the individual functions additionally includes adjusting a level of sound from the corresponding piece of audio-video equipment, and the decoder additionally decodes the volume adjusting function represented thereby, and the sound generator is adjusted to vary a volume
 5 of sound emitted by the sound generator.

18. The toy of either of claims 16 or 17, wherein the toy is either a stuffed animal or a doll.

19. Apparatus, comprising:

a photo-detector adapted to receive infra-red radiation and generate an electrical signal proportional thereto,

5 a memory storing identification data of each of a plurality of infra-red signal protocols and data of signal patterns of corresponding distinct control functions within the individual infra-red signal protocols for which identification data is stored, said plurality of infra-red signal protocols and control function signal patterns being those of a plurality of remote controls for a corresponding plurality of types of audio-video equipment,

10 a micro-controller that compares the photo-detector electrical signal with the memory data for decoding a received infra-red radiation signal to identify the infra-red signal protocol and control function, and

a device that is controlled in accordance with the decoded control function.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the device is a sound source and the micro-controller further decodes a received infra-red radiation signal to identify at least one sound control function that controls the sound source according to said at least one sound control function.

21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said at least one identified control function includes muting the sound source.

22. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein said at least one identified control function includes raising or lowering the volume of the sound source.

23. The apparatus of any one of claims 19-22, wherein the apparatus is installed within a toy.

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